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MONTANA WEATHER AND CROP SUMMARY

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Statistical Reporting Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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FALL - WINTER WEATHER, OCTOBER 1965 - MARCH 1966

TEMPERATURE Temperatures averaged warmer than seasonal in almost all divisions.

In January, unseasonably cold temperatures prevailed in the central and east portion. This cold weather continued into February in the Northeastern and Southeastern divisions. In the northeast the January-February period was one of the coldest in many years, but it was not so prolonged as the winter of 1964-65. Temperatures fell to below zero at a number of North Central Division stations November 16, but zero minimums did not prevail generally until December 25 - 27. However it was not quite so cold along the western border. A cold wave entered the State March 1 and temperatures March 3 - 5 (particularly east of the Divide) were among the coldest of the winter. Loma observed the winter's coldest, -40° , January 20. An unusually warm spell of weather October 8 - 9 brought 70 to 80° maximums all areas. The mercury climbed to 90° at Crow Agency and Moorhead 9NE the 9th for the season's warmest. On March 30, several stations, mostly west portion, reported the warmest for so early in the season when maximums reached the 60's and high 70's.

PRECIPITATION Although precipitation was above normal in the Western and North Central divisions in November, and the Western, North Central, Central, and Northeastern in January; October-March precipitation averaged below normal for the entire State. Only a few stations along the western border (Superior and Thompson Falls) and in the central portion (Choteau and Great Falls) measured more than the normal October-March precipitation. October was the driest since records began in 1895.

SEVERE STORMS The snow that fell during the March 1 storm drifted four and five feet some areas making surface transportation difficult. Many schools were closed for a few days until roads could be opened. This storm contributed to the death of five persons, three from highway accidents caused by blowing snow and slippery roads, and two from heart attacks while shoveling snow. There were no other damaging storms.

WATER SUPPLY FORECASTS AS OF APRIL 1, 1966

WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE The following April through September stream flow forecasts are expressed in percentage of the 15-year (1948-62) averages for the rivers listed: Kootenai at Libby 99; Clark Fork above Missoula 66, at St. Regis 70, and near Plains 81; Blackfoot near Bonner 71; Flathead at Columbia Falls 90; and the Bitterroot at the mouth 77.

EAST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE Snow survey measurements indicate high elevation snow water equivalents are only slightly more than two-thirds of average above Three Forks, and 80 to 90 percent of average in the Sun and Marias headwaters. The following water-year streamflows (October 1, 1965 through September 30, 1966) are forecast for the following Missouri River Basin points in percentage of the 1948-62 averages: Red Rock near Monida 84; Beaverhead at Barratts 83; Big Hole at Melrose 79; Jefferson at Sappington 79; Madison at McAllister 104; Gallatin at Logan 93; and the Missouri at Toston 91. The expected flow on the Sun River at Gibson Reservoir is 90 percent. On the Yellowstone River the water-year streamflow forecasts (October 1 - September 30) are: Corwin Springs 90 percent; Livingston, 92; Billings, 87; Miles City, 83; and Sidney 84 percent. The March-September streamflow on the Milk River is expected to be 58 percent of the 15-year (1948-62) average at Eastern Crossing. The above forecasts are based on April 1 snow measurements and that normal precipitation will fall during the spring and summer months.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK SUMMARY, 6 MONTHS, OCTOBER 1965 - MARCH 1966

HARVEST Practically all harvesting operations were resumed during the first week of October after being delayed for more than 6 weeks by wet weather. Entire communities threw their manpower resources into the harvest effort. Business people and schools cooperated by releasing employees and students for work in the fields. Three consecutive weeks of warm-dry weather during October enabled growers to make good progress with their belated grain harvest. By October 15, only two percent of the wheat and four percent of the barley and oats crops remained unharvested. Normally, grain harvest is completed by mid-September.

Despite the late harvest and losses from rust, shattering and sprouting, final output was near record high. Production of wheat was the largest since 1955. The oats crop was 12 percent above 1964; and barley output was the third largest of record. Digging of sugar beets and potatoes made normal progress but the dry bean harvest was later than usual. Weather remained mostly favorable through the completion of beet harvest, about November 10.

FALL PLANTING Winter wheat seeding, normally 80 percent completed by October 1, was only 45 percent finished by that date in 1965. Seeding got underway in late August but was delayed six weeks by wet weather. Although favored by adequate moisture, growth of early seedlings was handicapped by colder than seasonal

(Over)

temperatures. However, seasonally warm weather prevailed in October and November and both early and late fall seedings made good growth through the first half of November. The growing season tapered off slowly and was terminated on December 12 when light snowfall and colder temperatures forced dormancy. During the winter months temperatures were generally mild and snow cover was sufficient to give some protection to winter wheat. Winter kill of wheat seedings was indicated as light in late March when spring tillage operations got off to an earlier than usual start.

RANGE LIVESTOCK Fall supplies of range feed were abundant, and ranges remained open to grazing in most areas through the first three weeks of December. Mild weather permitted continued grazing, and little supplemental feeding was necessary before December 1. Winter weather was also generally mild and supplemental feeding was below normal. Supplies of hay remained adequate in most localities throughout the winter. Calving and lambing were nearly one-third completed by April 1 under nearly ideal weather conditions for Montana.

PRECIPITATION: 6-Month Total, October 1965 - March 1966 (Inclusive)

Station	Precip-itation	6-Month Normal	Station	Precip-itation	6-Month Normal
<u>WESTERN DIVISION</u>					
Alberton	7.04		Missoula 2 WNW	4.56	5.29
Big Fork 10 S	8.16		Missoula WBAS	4.91	5.49
Creston	4.69		Ovando 1 SW	6.43	8.15
Darby	4.50	8.24	Paradise	8.04	
Deer Lodge 3 W	1.72		Philipsburg RS	2.46	5.23
Drummond	3.00	3.74*	Pleasant Valley	7.65	10.85
East Anaconda	2.90	4.79	Polebridge	10.97	
Elliston	2.85		Polson, Kerr Dam	4.02	
Essex	18.98		Saint Ignatius	4.09	5.79
Eureka RS	6.32		Saint Regis RS	12.57	
Fortine 1 N	5.75	8.44	Seeley Lake RS	9.17	
Hamilton	3.65	5.55	Stevensville	4.62	6.14
Haugan	15.13	22.27	Sula	4.64	
Heron 2 NW	18.87	24.10	Summit	19.10	
Hungry Horse Dam	14.20		Superior	9.98	8.78
Kalispell WBAS	4.67	7.33	Swan Lake	13.33	
Kalispell	4.81		Thompson Falls	12.80	12.62
Kila	5.52		Trout Creek RS	16.05	
Libby 1 NE	10.57	11.77	Troy RS	15.53	
Libby 32 SSE	13.87		Warland 12 N	8.71	
Lindbergh Lake	11.08		West. Mont. Br. Sta.	2.72	
Lone Pine 1 W NW	4.30	5.89	West Glacier	12.15	16.32

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

Alder 17 S	2.05		Jackson	3.08	
Belgrade AP FAA	2.82	4.17*	Lakeview	5.78	
Boulder State School	1.71		Lima	1.68	2.72
Bozeman MSU	3.96	6.48	Norris 3 ENE	3.48	
Bozeman 12 NE	11.25		Norris, Madison PH	2.47	5.84
Butte Airport FAA	1.96	3.15	Pony	3.29	
Dillon Airport FAA	1.50	2.12*	Trident	1.31	
Dillon WMC	1.39	3.22	Twin Bridges	1.46	
Divide 2 NW	2.16		Virginia City	3.50	4.42
Ennis	2.13	2.28	West Yellowstone	9.58	11.59
Gallatin Gateway 26 S	3.49		Whitehall	1.21	2.11*
Hebgen Dam	11.05	11.53	Wisdom	2.34	

NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION

Babb 6 NE	3.65	6.02	Havre WBAS	2.16	3.28
Big Sandy	1.85	2.82	Iliad	1.82	
Brady Aznoe	1.42		Joplin 1 N	1.34	
Browning	4.05	4.64	Loma 1 WNW	2.57	
Chester 26 NNW	1.40		Lonesome Lake	2.12	
Chinook	1.65	3.27	Loring 10 N	1.49	
Choteau	2.38	2.11	Malta	1.33	3.00
Cleveland 5 ENE	2.16		Malta 35 S	1.39	
Conrad	1.52	2.69	Phillips 1 S	.94	
Cut Bank Airport	1.30	2.41	Rudyard 30N	1.18	

* Estimated normal.

PRECIPITATION: 6-Month Total, October 1965 - March 1966 (Inclusive)

Station	Precip-itation	6-Month Normal	Station	Precip-itation	6-Month Normal
<u>NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION (Cont'd)</u>					
Del Bonita	2.06		Santa Rita 14 N	3.21	
Dunkirk 14 NNE	1.43	2.73	Shelby Airport	.54	
Fairfield	2.36	2.40	Shonkin 7 S	6.13	
Forks 4 NNE	1.67		Simpson 6 NW	1.36	2.04
Fort Assiniboine	1.77	2.69	Sweetgrass	1.64	
Fort Benton	3.42	4.45*	Telegraph Creek	1.34	2.76
Geraldine	2.54		Tiber Dam	1.16	
Gildford	1.42		Turner	2.23	
Goldbutte 7 N	1.17		Valier	1.31	2.50
Harlem	1.37	3.35	Zortman	2.48	
<u>CENTRAL DIVISION</u>					
Augusta	2.69	3.76	Lincoln RS	6.55	
Austin 1 W	2.98		Martinsdale 3 NNW	1.70	3.05*
Barber	1.91		Melstone	2.07	3.30
Canyon Ferry PH	1.62		Moccasin Exp. Sta.	1.69	3.09
Cascade 5 S	3.37	3.82	Neihart	7.34	
Cascade 20 SSE	2.84		Rogers Pass 6 NNE	5.70	
Flatwillow 4 ENE	2.41	3.04	Roundup	1.89	2.71
Gibson Dam	4.33	5.48	Roy 8 NE	1.73	
Grass Range	3.03		Roy 24 NE Mobridge	1.13	
Great Falls WBAS	4.65	4.35	Ryegate 18 NNW	1.39	
Harlowton	2.16		Stanford 1 WNW	1.39	3.77
Helena WBAS	1.98	3.36	Sun River 5 SW	2.79	
Holter Dam	1.82	3.42	Toston 3 SW	1.54	
Judith Gap 13 E	2.75		Townsend	1.67	
Lennep 5 SW	3.57		Utica 11 WSW	3.47	
Lewistown Airport	2.28	4.50	White Sulphur Sprgs	1.88	7.27
			Winifred	1.99	3.70
<u>SOUTH CENTRAL DIVISION</u>					
Ballantine	2.73	3.59	Joliet	2.66	
Balfry 9 SSW	.37		Kirby 1 S	4.44	
Big Timber	2.21	4.30	Livingston	2.52	4.29
Billings Water Plant	2.44	3.97	Livingston Airport	2.15	4.14*
Billings WBAS	3.82	4.50	Melville 4 W	2.42	
Bridge	2.60		Mystic Lake	5.38	8.77
Broadview	2.36		Red Lodge	6.43	6.63
Columbus	1.90	3.75	Wilsall	2.55	
Crow Agency	3.65	5.12	Wilsall 8 ENE	4.28	
Custer	2.46		Wyola	1.81	5.13*
Gardiner	.89		Yellowstone Park NE Ent	7.53	
Hardin	2.43		Yellowtail Dam	3.97	
Hysham	3.03				
<u>NORTHEASTERN DIVISION</u>					
Bloomfield 6 E	1.15		Mosby 2 ENE	1.13	
Bredette	1.01		Mosby 18 N	1.13	
Circle	.65	2.05*	Nohly 3 WNW	.93	
Cohagen 9 WSW	1.66		Opheim 12 SSE	.51	
Culbertson	1.36	2.58	Poplar	.68	2.37
Ft. Peck Power Plant	1.36		Raymond Brdr. Sta.	1.35	
Frazer	.61	3.08	Redstone	.84	
Glasgow WBAS	.99	3.01	Richey	.50	
Glendive	1.96	2.82	Savage	1.06	2.59
Hinsdale	.94		Scobey	.91	
Jordan	1.19	2.50	Sidney	1.29	2.76**
Jordan 22 E	.58		Vida	1.64	4.43
Lambert	.54		Westby	2.21	
Lustre 4 NNW	.97	1.97	Wolf Point 4 ESE	1.33	
Medicine Lake 3 SE	1.53	2.42			

* Estimated normal

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<u>SOUTHEASTERN DIVISION</u>					
Albion 1 N	1.28		Mildred	1.38	2.30
Biddle 8 SW	1.60		Miles City	2.36	
Birney 2 SE	1.22		Miles City Airport	2.76	3.13
Boyes	.81		Mizpah 4 NNW	1.29	
Brandenberg	2.44		Moorhead 9 NE	1.67	
Broadus	2.00	3.75*	Otter 9 SSW	2.79	
Carlyle 10 W	1.98		Plevna	2.23	2.90
Golstrip	2.75	4.65	Ridgway 1 S	1.85	
Malakala	2.24	2.90	Sonnette 2 WNW	1.66	
Forsyth 2 E	2.34		Terry	.92	
Ingomar 11 NE	.87		Wibaux 2 E	.82	
Lame Deer	1.85				

* Estimated normal.

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